

May 2016

Safety of Public is in Expert Hands

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Recommended Citation

Baltrip, Kimetris N. (2011) "Safety of Public is in Expert Hands," *Seek*: Vol. 1: Iss. 1.

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Safety of public is in expert hands

Standing against the autumn wind on a plot of land adjacent to K-State's Biosecurity Research Institute, three identical purple signs announce: "Future Home of NBAF."

The signs, situated along Denison and Kimball Avenues, face different compass

directions, ensuring that passersby can hardly miss the clearing taking place for the National Bio and Agro-defense Facility, which is no small subject.

"It will be a certainty that when completed, NBAF will incorporate the latest state-of-the-art design and advanced technologies, making it the most modern and safe agricultural biocontainment facility in the world," said K-State's Jerry Jaax, a veterinarian and associate vice president for research compliance.

NBAF in Manhattan will be an extensive biocontainment laboratory, where researchers will study diseases that threaten animal agriculture and public health. The facility is being constructed through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

According to the DHS website, the facility will be 500,000 gross square feet with 10 percent of its space dedicated to BSL-4 research, a biosafety classification that the American Biological Safety Association cites as designated for dangerous and exotic agents.

Jaax said the DHS would employ extensive safety and security measures to protect the K-State and Manhattan communities.

An estimated 300 to 350 personnel will be working in NBAF, according to Jaax, and all personnel will

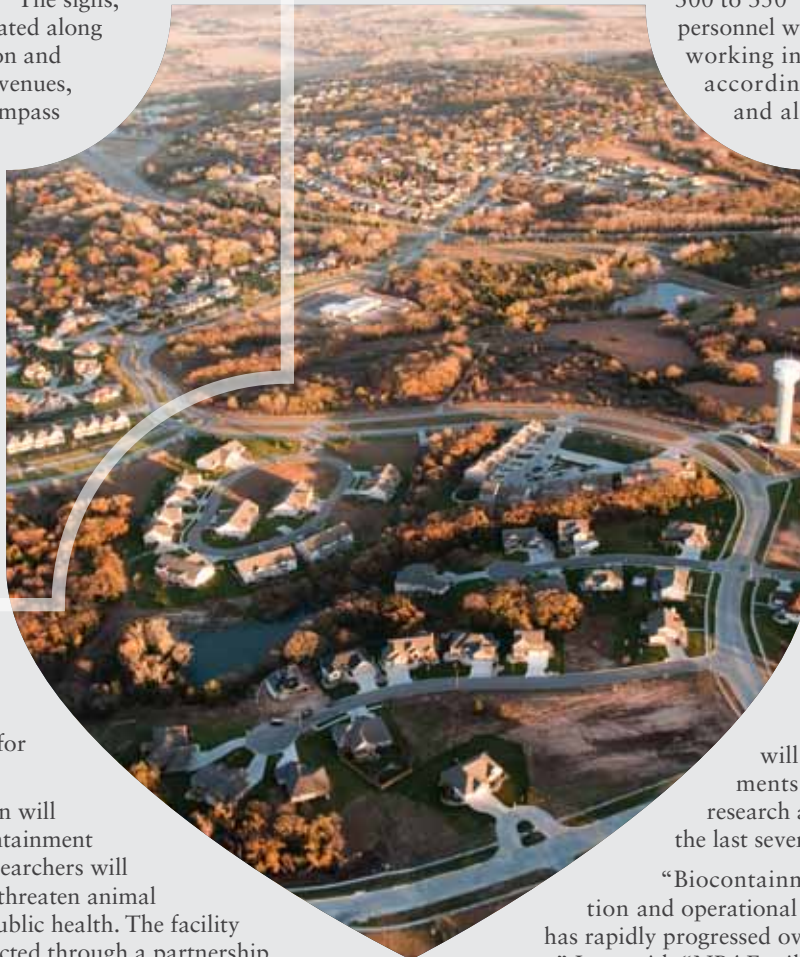
be required to have background and security checks as well as formal safety and technical training.

To keep NBAF running smoothly, the facility will require the expertise of a wide range of skilled workers, including logisticians, engineers, technical writers, motor pool specialists, custodial and administrative staff, security officers, and of course, safety, biosafety and occupational health professionals.

The Manhattan facility will benefit from advancements in biocontainment research and development over the last several decades.

"Biocontainment construction and operational technology has rapidly progressed over the last 60 years," Jaax said. "NBAF will incorporate successful technologies and designs used in dozens of other biocontainment laboratories around the world."

Construction of the facility's central utility plant and laboratory is projected to begin in FY2011. For more details, visit the DHS website at www.dhs.gov.



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